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Vol. XIV No. 1

Autumn 1956

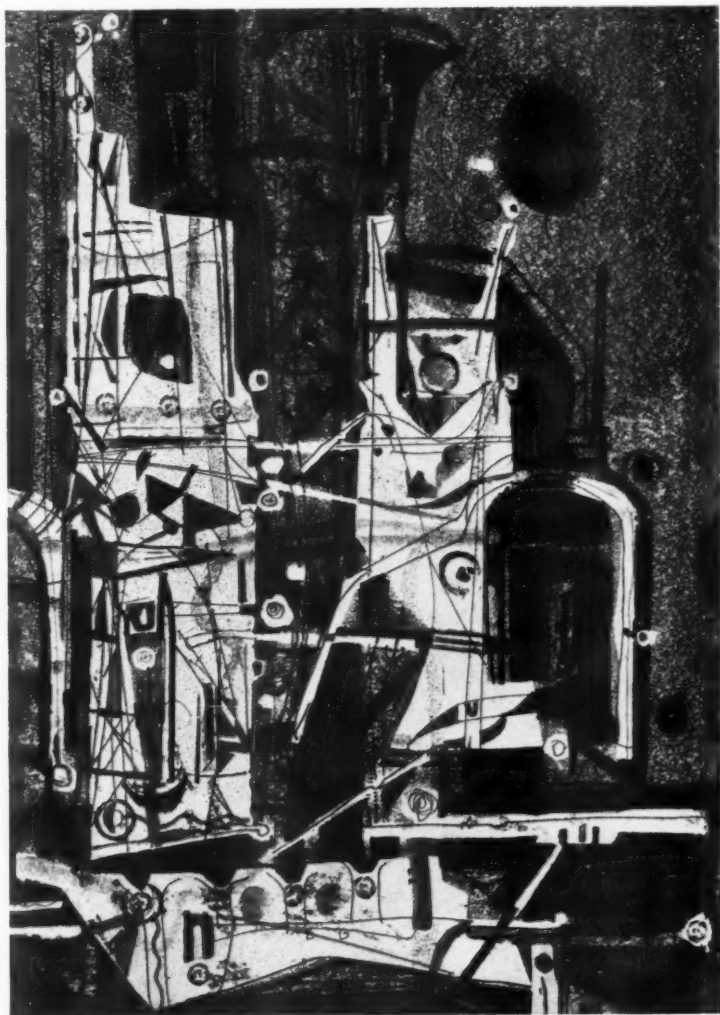


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A Disciple of Shaka, woodcut, by Shiko Munakata of Japan who won the award for print-making at the XXVIII Biennale in Venice. This was the first time that Japan has participated in the Biennale

CANADIAN ART

Autumn Number

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Cover design by Gerald Trotter

CANADIAN ART VOL. XIV, NO. 1 AUTUMN NUMBER

PUBLISHED FOUR TIMES A YEAR
BY THE SOCIETY FOR ART PUBLICATIONS, OTTAWA

SUBSCRIPTION RATE

\$1.75 a year (\$4.75 for 3 years) in Canada and other countries. Cheques should be made payable at par in Ottawa. 50c a copy. Authorized as Second Class Mail, Post Office Department, Ottawa. Advertising rates upon application. All articles are listed in the Art Index, New York, and the Canadian Index of the Canadian Library Association, Ottawa.

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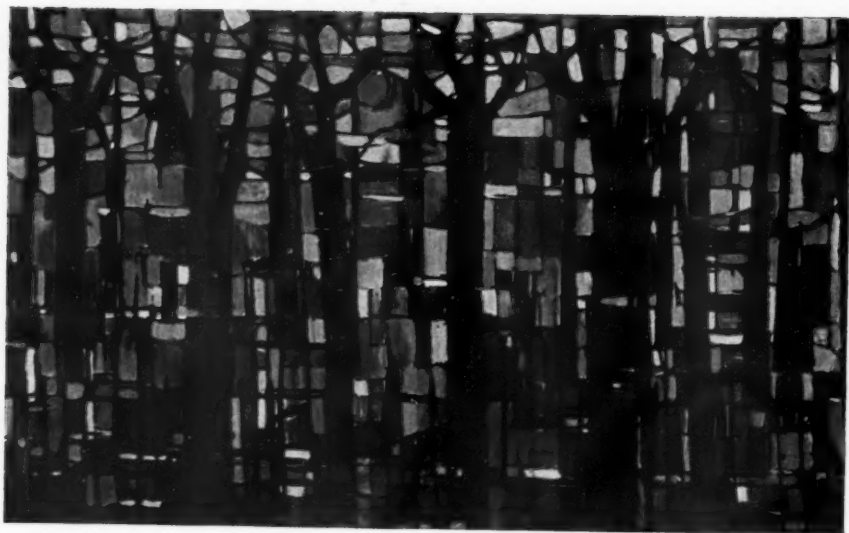
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GORDON SMITH

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Gordon Smith and the Gesture of Painting

ANTHONY EMERY

To judge from the influence which the work of the late Nicolas de Staël is exerting on the younger painters of the Old World and the New, and the increasing frequency with which one sees Soutine's paintings reproduced or referred to, it would seem that painters everywhere are reacting against the puritanism that has inhibited oil painters in the last two or three decades. For years now we have been treated to pictures in which the paint was eked sparsely out, leaving large areas of bare canvas; others in which the pigment was put on grittily with the flat of the hand, giving the appearance of cement or plaster; others again—the pictorial geometricians were the chief offenders—appeared to have been executed with spray-gun and masking-tape. The idea seemed to be to conceal the hideous truth that oil paint had been used, as if painting in oils were a sin or anti-social, unethical or, worse, un-American.

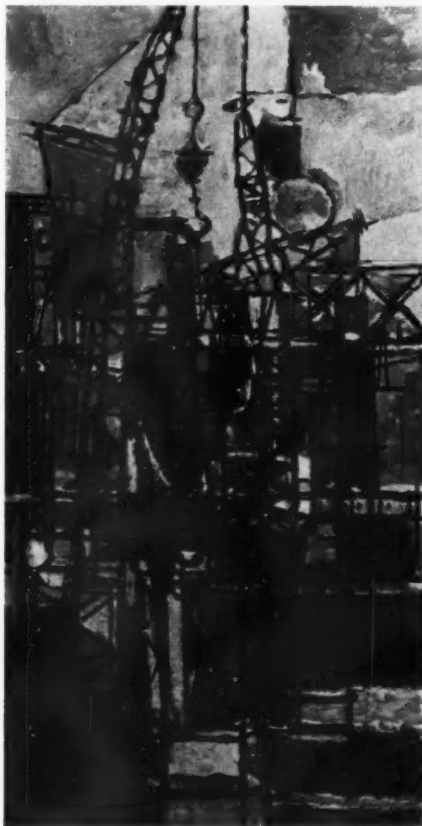
Now, however, the pendulum has swung, and painters like Sir Matthew Smith, Soutine, de Staël and Gerald Wilde are coming into their own. In Canada there are at least two painters who communicate to the onlooker the pleasure they derive from manipulating their chosen medium: Borduas, whose succulent nougat-like confections have appeared in many recent Canadian exhibitions, and Gordon Smith of Vancouver, who won the award in the second Biennial of Canadian painting at the National Gallery of Canada in 1955. Both handle pigment with great dexterity but, whereas Borduas is seemingly content to follow whither his reflexes will lead him, Gordon Smith stays close to the forms and colours of nature. He is, to borrow a useful label from Patrick Heron, an abstract-figurative, a painter in whose work "the abstract components add up to an oblique statement of landscape or still life, without the reference being overt." Gordon Smith paints nature at one remove: he faces the landscape, but views it with the inward eye.

While "abstract-figurative" will serve as a

convenient, if clumsy, label to indicate the form in Smith's painting, his method of handling the medium is closely allied to that of the expressionists. "Such painters can loosely be described as expressionists in so far as they exploit the music of forms and colours to crystallize emotions and feelings, but they do not share the anxiety of the out-and-out expressionist to use art as a medium for expressing ideas. What really obsesses them is the gesture of painting itself." They are con-

GORDON SMITH

Construction: Post Office, Vancouver



cerned with "the possibilities of manipulating paint—often in a fashion close to automatism—to establish a complex of rhythms and colour harmonies which are immediately reflective of subjective states." This statement, originally written to describe the painting of Gerald Wilde, fits Gordon Smith's work admirably. His latest paintings, with their large forms freely handled in juicy, high-keyed colour, reveal both the sensuous pleasure he derives from handling paint, and the delight which comes from the affectionate observation of the form and colour of the trees, the rocks, the flowers and sea-wrack of this beautiful Pacific coast.

It was not always thus. Gordon Smith, who was born in England and came to Canada, when still an adolescent, passed through a long apprenticeship before achieving his present mastery. He himself would deny that he is anything but a humble beginner, groping his way from one vantage point to the next, for he is the most modest, the simplest, the least assertive of men. His simplicity and his sincerity give the key to Gordon Smith's development as an artist. He has a horror of trickery or cleverness, and when he finds that

his right hand is working with that facile ease that can lead to slickness he will deliberately use his left hand, working with calculated awkwardness until his sensibility triumphs over his reflexes.

Looking back over his output one can see how slow and painful his growth has been: the early, careful, war-time sketches, then the post-war landscapes, tinged with poetry borrowed from Sutherland and Vaughan. In 1951 a visit to California brought Gordon Smith into contact with the Bay Group of California painters, and the experience for him was powerfully cathartic. From this moment on he was released from much that had restrained and inhibited him; henceforward all that was stale and dead in his work was swept away on a tide of vigorous and vital expression. From the period 1952-1955 date the "hard" rectilinear paintings that first brought him to notice. Of these, *Structure with Red Sun*, award winner in the 1955 Biennial, is a good example. Recently he has moved from these low-keyed landscapes and townscapes, with their fuliginous blacks and subtle tones all tightly knit on a closely articulated scaffolding of crossed horizontals and verticals,



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GORDON SMITH

Rocks by the Shore

Collection:

Alan Jarvis, Ottawa

The close relationship between the sketch of rock and seawrack (below) and the final composition based on it (above) demonstrates the type of abstraction derived from natural forms which is common to much of Smith's work.



to a freer and bolder use of larger forms, with more insistence on the treble than the bass in colour.

In these latest paintings, Gordon Smith has arrived at a personal and original mode of expression; with the possible exception of the Frenchman, Pignon, in his later period, I can think of no one whose work bears any resemblance to it in form or feeling. But there is nothing static in Smith's approach and we must expect that his growth will be marked by changes of direction, but these changes will come slowly, for his digestion of experience is slow, and within him there is a considerable time-lag between experience and expression. It is a pause, to parody a popular

slogan, that not only refreshes but re-creates and re-organizes as well.

It is this slow digestion, this un-intellectual approach, which accounts for the sureness of Smith's grasp of his material. When he comes to paint he is not obsessed with problems of arrangement and composition; these have been falling into place during the period of mental conflict and cogitation which takes place beforehand. In front of his easel he can give free rein to the "gesture of painting", and the works that issue mint-new from his brush bear the stamp of authority. Gordon Smith, as an "abstract-figurative expressionist", is already an important painter; he is now only at the beginning of his career.



OSSIP
ZADKINE
*Monument
to Rotterdam*
Bronze

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Ossip Zadkine — The Sculptor As Poet

PIERRE JANSSEN

The works of Ossip Zadkine, although extremely well known in Europe, have not been so familiar to Canadians. In his long career as a sculptor in Paris, he, however, has had many Canadian students and through one of them, Julien Hébert of Montreal, he was persuaded to lend most of his major works for an exhibition planned by the National Gallery of Canada. So, 39 of Zadkine's sculptures in wood and stone and bronze and 41 of his gouaches and drawings have now been assembled for showing in seven museums in Canada and the United States. The exhibition will be in Ottawa in October, Toronto in November, Montreal in January and will then go to Winnipeg, Vancouver, Seattle and San Francisco. Zadkine, himself, will also come to Canada in late October to give a series of public lectures.

His monument to the bombing of Rotterdam, The Destroyed City, which now stands in the main square of that rebuilt seaport, has been hailed as one of the most moving and sternly dramatic sculptures of this age. Through it and other works of his which have entered Dutch collections, his reputation has become particularly and deservedly high in Holland. That is why, to introduce Zadkine to our readers, we obtained the permission of a Dutch art critic, Pierre Janssen, to translate into English his appreciation of Zadkine which originally appeared in the catalogue of an exhibition held in Arnhem in the Netherlands in 1954.

IN Rotterdam people saw the monument he had created to their city and, as happens so often in the presence of a great work of art, they were greatly moved.

Ossip Zadkine looked at the birds, the gulls flying over the harbour, and said, "That monument won't be complete until one of them builds a nest in its cleft".

For a work of sculpture, according to Zadkine is not a thing which can be done and then put away for ever as a finished work.

Zadkine adds no permanent, unchanging forms to our world. He does not proceed from any universal concept, as do those sculptors whose work is based on the anatomy of the human body, in one or another of a variety of interpretations. Zadkine uses the human body as the musical key for the melody he wants to compose. Indeed, his works only initiate a melody; they do not conclude one. His works do not offer a sense of fulfilment; his sculptures are not mere surface forms; they are not finite and finished; above all, they refuse to remain only narrowly in touch with the space that surrounds and penetrates them. He is not an artist who conforms to academic laws of construction. To him these laws are too commanding and forbidding, and also too simple as by using them, he maintains, one can too easily guarantee what the results and

effects will be in sculpture.

The purity which he seeks is not the sort of purity one achieves by excluding all apparent irrelevancies. It is one based rather on the total inclusion of everything the artist wants to assemble, to join and to bridge and to cause to grow. In him, sculptor and poet are one. The solid mass achieves fluidity; space itself becomes an integral part of his work, and its very emptiness is turned by him into a song.

He incises lines in the torso he has chiselled from the wooden block. The feeling of the tree trunk that was persists in the human figure carved out of it. Light and shadow are called into play to give a surface and a skin to the nude figure. At other times, forms become purely poetic compositions, people are made into a forest, or into musical instruments.

In a certain sense, Zadkine is a destroyer of images. His Dionysian passions, his tremendous sense of rhythm, could not but collide head on with all that is motionless and finite in the art of sculpture. The aggressive side of his personality felt imprisoned within those traditions which held that sculpture only had significance when it delineated the human form. Yet despite his aggressiveness he has always had a profound sensitivity to line, texture and colour, and to the intrinsic beauty of wood and stone and bronze.



OSSIP ZADKINE. *The Adviser*. Bronze

Zadkine felt that sculptors who worked in those traditions were shut in behind closed doors. By emphasizing too much the study of anatomy they were choking off the very fountainhead of their art. At the turn of the century, Zadkine was a young Russian newly arrived in Western Europe. In this way, he was perhaps able to perceive, with greater keenness than those who had always lived immersed in these traditions, how overdeveloped and how stagnant much of the sculpture of the nineteenth century was.

Zadkine, as he looks back to those days, always pays homage to Rodin, who even then was ready to break through the bounds of tradition, as for example in his *Balzac*. But his opinion of other sculptors of that time tends to be one-sided, even of those whose work, like that of Daumier, served as leavening for the great artistic uprisings of a later day.

It is strange that Zadkine has always continued to feel this immediate past as a norm to be rejected. Nevertheless, he shows no hesitation in approaching the fountains of the past whenever he feels he can taste there the wine



OSSIP ZADKINE. *The Birth of Forms*. Bronze

of the human soul. Aggressive though he is, "modern" as he may appear, he is yet able to turn with affection and love to the vast total of our cultural heritage. But he does this while remaining himself unshackled. With baroque fierceness he maintains his freedom, and no dogma, not even that of cubism, holds him in its grip. None the less, cubism aided him, because it insisted on a consciousness of the permeation of space and of the need for a purification of mass and contour to achieve tenseness and tautness. Before cubism froze within him into a hard, dead thing—and as such to be rejected—Zadkine had already assimilated the essentials of it.

Using what he had learned from cubism, he then approached pre-Hellenic sculpture. And here he upset balances that had been for centuries in repose. Not for him the self-satisfied looks nor the smiles of pleasure of the archaic Greeks and their gods. Zadkine pierced the shells of their bodies and re-created them. He forced masses to be sombre and heavy, or bright and slender, as meaning dictated.

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Pursuing his thoughts, he engraves hands on his materials. These are not superfluous signs. They are the whisperings of a life hidden inside the solid matter and within the body. Also, they constitute hesitant contacts between sculptor and sculpture. They indicate secrets that can be described only by means of a still line.

A new Zadkine has tackled in his sculpture the Laocoön myth, the Olympian struggle of a father and sons against reptiles. However, he does not portray it as the photographic snapshot of a moment's athletic encounter, but as a never-ending struggle in nature, a growing spiral, a tumbling, fermenting movement. Zadkine constantly develops movement. It appears in the most diverse motifs, this whirling, pushing tool of his derived from the baroque. It is found in *The Human Forest*, in *The Birth of Forms*, in *The Phoenix*. Uncontrollably rising, dividing and simultaneously uniting, complex and diverse and withal of an organic simplicity. All-inclusive, and yet allowing for the existence of empty space; filled, although the centre of a void. In his Rotterdam monument this movement induces a feeling of powerful tragedy.

Zadkine has erected monuments to the sufferings of Sebastian, to Diana and Orpheus. These figures exist in a state of becoming; while they are not isolated from the earth wherein their trunks are rooted, they yet reach out towards fulfilment.

Ossip Zadkine is a poet in the almost forgotten sense of a singer whose entire body is transformed into the song he sings and who plays upon himself as an instrument. His sculpture of *The Poet*, which he did as a homage to Paul Éluard, and that of *Orpheus* prove Zadkine to be such a singer.

The Poet is half tree, half human. Between the two halves, in the duality of being part of life, yet departing from it, lies the instrument of his creation. Between is space, like a sound. And the stammering, the crying, the burning words envelop the body.

Orpheus seizes his body and his body is the lyre; his figure is suffused with space; in this way this sculpture passes over into music.

OSSIP ZADKINE. *Orpheus*. Bronze





JEAN-PAUL RIOPELLE

Composition

*The National Gallery
of Canada*

Has the Emperor Clothes?

GRAHAM McINNES



PAUL-ÉMILE
BORDUAS

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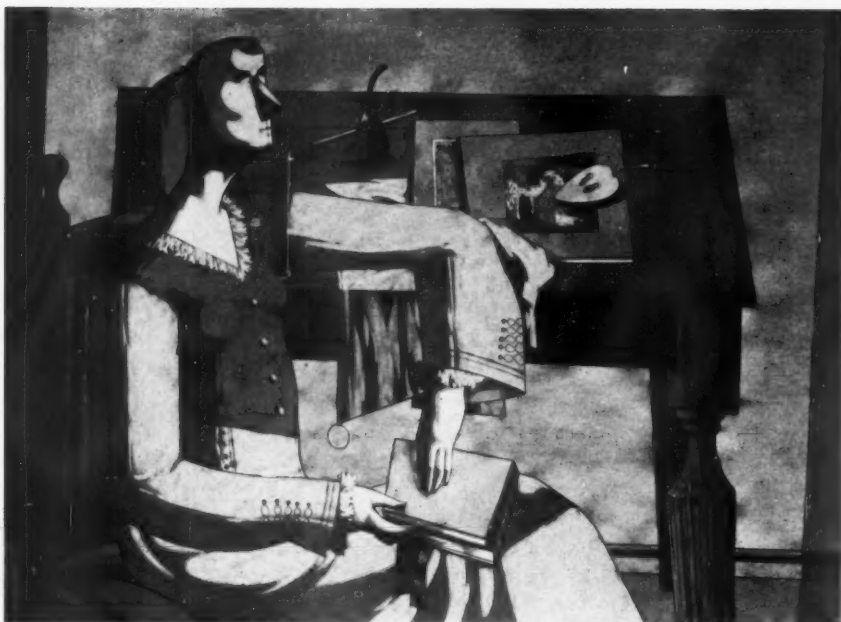
AMONG many exhilarating developments awaiting me upon my return to Canada after almost four years abroad there was one that proved both puzzling and depressing. This was the apparent determination of a large group of contemporary painters to deny themselves access to the inspiration which may be derived from the external world of commonly communicable experience. These painters, whether abstract or non-objective, (and I would concede that they are not the same thing) seemed to have deliberately robbed themselves—and incidentally ourselves, the viewers—of the delights of the spirit which are to be found in using human experience and the visible world as points of departure for creative synthesis. To me the results of this decision seemed then and seem now predominantly sterile and emasculated.

Before my departure I had been familiar with the growing movement represented, perhaps at its best, by such painters as Borduas, Pellan and Riopelle. But this was one among many strands comprising the skein of our art. It did not at that time bear the weighty relationship to contemporary Canadian painting that it does now, and I was unprepared to find that it had since become so widespread. It seems to me that this exclusive preoccupation with the abstract and the unobjective is an artistic heresy that condemns many of our painters to bootless variations on a theme essentially bleak, because it leaves out of account both the visible world and the broad impulses of humanity. The painters who practise this craft may be content that this should be so, as indeed were the proponents of the more violent and puritanical Christian heresies, such as Antinomianism, which flourished in remote places and which, denied the sustenance of the main stream of Christian thought, ultimately developed into grotesque and monstrous forms. But it is we as well as they who are the losers by this cult, and I speak as a loser. The abandonment of the Canadian environment as an inspiration is perhaps not to be deplored in a world increasingly shrunken and interdependent. But the abandonment of the visible world and of humanity is to be deplored, for it dooms such practitioners ultimately to become as extinct as the flightless

birds and, from my own observation, somewhat less varied. The moa, for example, was subdivided into such categories as *euryapteryx*, *cnemiornis*, *emeus crassus* and *dimornis maximus*; it seems hard to find even this amount of variety among our non-objective painters.

My first impression upon returning to Ottawa was that the National Gallery had acquired a considerable number of these paintings. Good, I thought: gaps are being filled. Then I noticed that the pages of *Canadian Art* carried many articles and reproductions; clearly this was a trend that was exciting much interest, and visits to galleries in Toronto and Montreal underlined this assumption. But what for me reduced it to ludicrous proportions was a visit to the 1956 spring exhibition of the Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour. At first glance—so uniform was the quality of the work—it seemed that automation must have found a fresh field to conquer. At last glance, and after an hour of puzzled searching, the impression was confirmed. There was also a nagging insidious doubt. The presence of works by so many young painters and students, as well as the abrupt change in style by a number of respected senior painters, stirred speculation that the cult of the non-objective had become fashionable and prompted the perhaps unworthy thought that it had also become lucrative. A subsequent examination of the commercial sponsorship of the movement by the great New York art houses hardened this suspicion. Thus to the negative effect of the show itself was now added the equally depressing discovery that a large group of Canadian painters had been swept up in the wake of a frenzied megalopolitan ramp, which is approaching a peak of avid discovery by the monied illiteracy, just when Europe—the *fons et origo* of Western art—is showing signs of shaking it off, along with Sartre, Kafka, atonalism, and the H-line.

Rarely can a decision to geld their creative impulses have been taken with such fervour and unanimity, and so late in the day. Rarely—one is tempted to say—in the field of human endeavour, has so much been painted by so many for so few. There appears to be a fanatical, where it is not an opportunist, deter-



JEAN
DALLAIRE

*Composition
(Femme assise)*

*The National
Gallery of
Canada*

mination to turn the eye inward onto the barest possible uplands of formal non-objective expression, thus robbing the work of all values of the spirit, and placing it outside that area where form and emotion have striven and compromised for some six thousand years. When youths in art school talk of personal expression and produce at the best pleasing arrangements of pattern and colour and at the worst doodles of psychiatric interest; when prominent and established artists suddenly change their style to form groups which will tickle the eyes of the public, and when both categories paint in a fashion so similar that it is hard to tell them apart, one has the right to ask: How many of the people paint in this manner by reason of an inward compulsion?

I cannot help feeling that a cult which inspires in, or compels from, its adherents a monotonous uniformity and results in an impoverishment of the spirit is not good. It is iconoclastic, and indeed puritanical, in its revolt against the flesh-pots of external appearances and the subjective emotions inspired by such appearances. But, in addition, it seems to me that its possibilities are extraordinarily meagre for the serious painter. They appear

to be limited to formal arrangements, abstract patterns and textural qualities: the proper concern of the ceramist and the textile worker, one would say. Further, this cult has an Achilles heel. For one may say farewell to humanity if one wishes, but the fact remains that certain shapes arouse in the viewer certain psychological overtones and mean certain things. They may, indeed, mean something the reverse of what the painter intended. If to this the non-objective painter replies that each paints the vision that is in him, then why do they paint alike? Can it be that this is already 1984, and that we think and feel alike? Can Wendell Wilkie's *One World* really have come true in this horrible manner? Or do these paintings simply reflect the agonized uncertainty of the West today? Perhaps, like Sartre's *Huit Clos*, this movement does represent the despair of the artists with the contemporary world. If so, it is in the nature of a renunciation, a pattern or gesture of disgust: St. Simeon Stylites of the mid-twentieth century.

It may be that in middle age a cynical realism has taken the place of youthful enthusiasms and that were I youthful (or, an unkind person might say, young in heart) I might

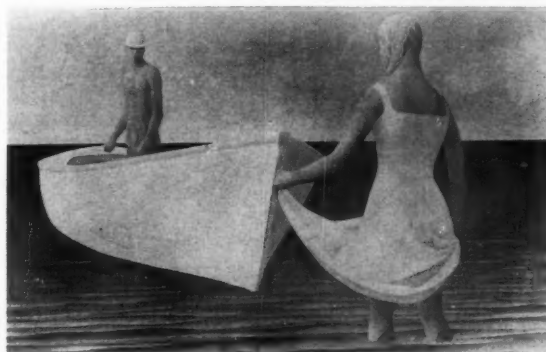
be dedicated to this cult as the form of expression best suited to the middle of the twentieth century. I am indeed far from desiring a return to the uncritical enthusiasms of the Group of Seven, or to the social realism of the thirties, or even to the joyous whoops of Montreal as it discovered in the middle of the Second World War what the French had been doing before the First World War. All is flux, as Heraclitus observed, and one cannot turn back the clock. But middle age also brings with it a deeper respect for human values and for that blending of the humanistic and the formal which, like a great battle, has swung back and forth over the field of painting for the last couple of thousand years. I am quite certain that, as a recent article in the *London Times* put it: "The painter who is determined to avoid the representation of natural forms assumes a crippling limitation". By representation I do not mean the glucose of Bouguereau or the sturdy naturalism of Frith. The conflict and the compromise between representation and form has continued for centuries and has produced in the process everyone from Picasso on the left to Raphael on the right. "Abstract expressionism", adds the *Times*, "is not only insolubly enigmatic, but by abjuring the external world, it needlessly rejects a terminology of almost limitless variety".

Nevertheless I am confident that non-objective painters will not for long be able to prevent nature from somehow creeping in. For while the indolent or the fanatical painter may find it excessively annoying to have the viewer compare his carefully disassociated square with a box, or his circle with a wheel, such discoveries ought to persuade him that his only future in his chosen field will be a

monotonous variation of geometrical forms. Indeed, it is this overwhelming strength of nature, in its largest sense, which in the end defeats even the most esoteric of the abstractionists. It is this strength which makes Pellan give his pictures titles; which produces the *cauchemar* atmosphere of Borduas' best work; which makes even Riopelle (from many of whose works one could shave several inches in any direction without disturbing the totality of the impression) convey the sense of joyous if feverish confusion.

There is no need to return to the rock and the pine but there may be a need for the younger painters to clear their minds of cant and for the older to return to the artist's traditional task of the communication of experience derived from the inspiration of the natural world. There may also be a need for those of us who are the losers by the cult of the non-objective—that is the viewers—to look more carefully at the walls of galleries and studios and to cast our net of appreciation more widely. In doing so we shall find that there is still a large and thoroughly vital body of contemporary painting which has discovered other means of self-expression. The pages of this article carry several such paintings, not necessarily the best nor necessarily typical, but provided simply as signposts for those interested in expanding their horizons. When minds have been cleared of cant and the artists and viewers have touched their Antaeus' heel to the visible world of communicable experience—good art (as well as its by-product, good Canadian art) will be produced. The present fashion will then be seen for what it is: an aberration of those who wish to convince us that, yes, they really do have clothes.

ALEX COLVILLE. *Woman, Man and Boat*
The National Gallery of Canada





LIONEL LEMOINE
FITZGERALD
West Coast Drawing



LIONEL LEMOINE
FITZGERALD
Doc Snider's House
The National Gallery
of Canada

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Lionel LeMoine FitzGerald 1890-1956

ROBERT AYRE

LIONEL LeMoine FitzGerald, who died at his home in Manitoba on August 5, was the last member of the Group of Seven, elected on the death of MacDonald in 1932. In a way, the Group was strange company for the man of the Prairie. While the others, following the nomadic tradition in Canadian painting, found their freedom in adventure, he found his in quietness; while they explored Canada from Georgian Bay to the Arctic, from the Rockies to the Nova Scotia shore, he stayed at home on the mild banks of the Assiniboine, on his grandmother's farm at Snowflake where he learned to read the earth and sky in his boyhood summers, and in his own back yard; while they celebrated their discoveries with impetuous rhythms and joyous colours, exulting in the pageantry of an immense and dramatic country, he stooped to study his narrow patch of earth, and to satisfy him it need be no more than a flower-pot could hold, so long as there was a plant growing in it; he painted only a few oils, with infinite patience rather than gusto; more water colours, sometimes with a flurry of swift impressionism; but more than anything he drew. Tom Thomson has been described as "The Man in the Canoe". A. Y. Jackson is "Père Raquette, The Man on Snowshoes". I have always thought of LeMoine FitzGerald as "The Man Who Looks Out of the Window". So different is his work in theme and key that the first critics of the Group of Seven would have been obliged to spare him their insults had he been one of the original members. Yet the Group recognized in this solitary, reticent spirit a fellow pioneer in the enlargement of Canadian experience through art, and though to FitzGerald the country the Group exploited and the way they painted it must have seemed exotic, it was not alien to him: he took things at a slower pace, he went deep rather than far, but he, too, felt the fresh wind blowing.

For most of his 66 years, LeMoine FitzGerald lived on the Prairie where he was born. He was past 30 before he ventured into

the outside world for a winter's study at the Art Students League in New York. He was past 50 when he began making his excursions to the Pacific Coast.

He went to British Columbia for three or four summers and two winters, but he was never tempted to stay. Even when he retired from the principalship of the Winnipeg School of Art he didn't, like so many Prairie people, look for escape from the rigours of the Manitoba winter. *Doc Snider's House* and *Williamson's Garage*, in the National Gallery, were painted outdoors when the temperature was below zero. The only concession Fitz-

LeMoine FitzGerald in his garden



Gerald made to the cold was to work within a shell, a small shack with a stove in it that he hauled about his yard on runners. Although he no longer took it so strenuously, when he was 60 he could write, speaking of his wife and himself: "Both Val and I are quite surprised at the way we have accepted the snow and even the below zero temperatures. Perhaps after all we belong here where the weather is positive almost any day of the year and no uncertainty about when it is winter and when summer."

If the weather couldn't drive him out, neither could the Prairie loneliness. Winnipeg is a thousand miles from the great centres but FitzGerald had no hankering for the excitements of life in the larger cities. They were distractions that could only interfere with his search. He had none of Cézanne's morbid fear of *grappins*, but he conserved his time and energy, refused to become involved in artists' politics, though when he got his "Irish up", as he used to say, he loved a good fight, and kept himself free without being a misanthrope. He was never the complete hermit. He was principal of the Winnipeg School of Art for nearly twenty years and hundreds of students remember him with affection: he had a quiet humour and wore his inborn dignity loosely and was sensitive and warm in his human relationships. Although he preferred to keep out of the limelight and work behind the scenes, he made his influence felt in his community and his fellow citizens recognized his contribution when the University of Manitoba gave him an honorary LL.D.

Apart from weather and isolation, no one has ever thought of the Prairie as having a life likely to satisfy the sensibilities of a painter. It seems too barren, lacking in the character and diversity necessary to stir the visual imagination. But it all depends on what you're seeking. Looking at FitzGerald's work and knowing of his inwardness, you can no longer be surprised that he should be content to remain on the Prairie, with only now and then a holiday outside to freshen his vision and sharpen his appreciation of his native province. When FitzGerald went to British Columbia, he did not paint panoramas of the mountains and the sea. He did not paint at

all. He went to the shore and sat down and was still, and he drew; he drew nothing but rocks and driftwood; and when he finished one drawing he simply turned around and began another. The shore was inexhaustible. Where another man might have seen nothing worthy of a second glance, FitzGerald found a universe. What interested him in the driftwood and rocks of the Pacific was the same thing that interested him in the slender trees of his own back yard at home, the apples on a plate, the tulips in pots on his windowsill—their shapes, as shapes, and the relationship between them, their music.

"I can think interesting pictures," he once wrote me, "but putting them down is a different proposition. That is a much slower process. It takes time and much work to get things flowing. I have to sneak up on the whole thing. Nature is all so confusing at the beginning and only is sorted out into some kind of order by steady plodding."

With true humility, he pursued the search all his life. His was a joyous adventure, though it was a quiet one, as slow and sure as the growth of a tree, unfolding branch by branch and leaf by leaf, in its own rhythm, in its own particular shape. FitzGerald approached nature with a controlled emotion and a cool intelligence and discovered order in its chaos. From the time when he first knew Cézanne, it was the abstract qualities of nature that absorbed him and he turned to the pure abstract in his last years, though, as he said, "Art is not design, structure, volume, tensions and all the modern vocabulary only. Surely there are some human values. . ."

LeMoine FitzGerald's search for form and values was directed by a mind as sinewy as it was subtle and carried on by a trained hand as well as a fine sensibility. His drawings are at once, like a plant, frail and powerful, and he was right when he used a word like "terrific" for the thrust of a young spruce. In looking in, he looked out; he was never concerned with expressing personal opinions in his art or making a display of personal emotions. Seeking the eternal forms, but always on the human level, never pretending to any esoteric mysticism, he transcended the shifts and shadows of the temporal world.

It's Fun to Draw

"It is the child that is important — not the results." This is the watchword of the broadcasts on creative art of the Department of Education, Manitoba. They are given regularly throughout the school year for grades IV to IX, and they aim to stimulate through poetry and story-telling the child's imagination until the child begins to express in drawing what he thinks and feels. To what extent the results are successful can be seen from this colour reprint of work which was done by children after listening to the broadcasts.

The principles behind this attempt to replace mechanical composition in school art classes with true creative expression are given concisely in an attractive, illustrated booklet published by the supervisor of school broadcasts in Manitoba. They deserve quotation:

"Art education is based on the principle that everyone possesses a creative instinct and that all children have a natural tendency to express themselves with different materials.

"The most natural form of art expression results when children create out of . . . real experiences, imaginative experiences, experiences arising out of their studies and from the books they read. It is important that this naturalness of expression, which is so spontaneous in young children, should survive as long as possible.

"Each drawing is a direct expression of the child's feelings and nothing should be done to change his ideas or to impose standards.

" . . . we shall do much to keep the spark of creativeness alive if we encourage the children by a sympathetic understanding of what they are trying to tell us.

"Our chief concern is to help the children grow and develop naturally. It is the child who is important — not the results."



Bobby Wolgroch, grade 6, Winnipeg.




Garry Kizick, grade 1, Lac du Bonnet.



Bobby Conklin, grade 3, St. James.



Clayton Eyolfson, grade 4, Arborg.



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Days at the Fair — A Review of the Venice Biennale 1956

R. H. HUBBARD

HAROLD TOWN

The Magician's Garden

Single autographic print

TO SOME today, Europe appears as a vast museum; and there is much, superficially, to justify this. The preservation and restoration of old buildings and the prohibition of the export of important works of art seem but outward signs of a mentality haunted by a sense of the nearness of death. To others, Europe is a great shop where every conceivable product of mind and hand is for sale, and again there is some evidence to support this opinion. Commercialism, spreading from the all-important tourist trade, seems to have infected even the old strongholds of scholarship and connoisseurship. But to me, both views are mistaken, for I think that anyone who takes the trouble will find European life and thought, threatened as they are, still to be fundamentally vital and uncorrupt. If Europe resembles anything, it is like a great permanent international fair comprising many national sections which from time to time 'put on' special features. (The Venice Biennale is one of these.) A great fair is no dull affair: a great deal of bustle, attractions for everyone, things

to do and things to buy, people to meet—all in the one place, for Europe is still a definite community in spite of national differences. Art plays an important part in the great fair, and that is why, as nearly everyone agrees, a museum curator from North America must pay regular visits to it, or else be sadly out of touch with events. But how to do this in a few weeks without setting his head spinning and without becoming as tired as a child at the end of a day at the Canadian National Exhibition? For him there are thousands of works of art to be seen, hundreds of colleagues to meet and talk shop with. Sometimes it seems to him that he is more likely to become an authority on the trains and hotels of Europe than its art, because he cannot possibly keep a clear memory of every painting, sculpture, print and drawing which he sees in a single summer.

For me this summer, Venice was the starting point of my days at the fair, and it is about Venice that I wish to write here. More than three thousand works of art were to be seen at the XXVIII Biennale d'Arte di Venezia.

The Venice Biennale is the world's greatest regular international exhibition of art, held every second year since 1895. I need add nothing to my account two years ago¹ of the setting for the exhibition, except to say that in this magical city one *must* believe in the lasting importance of the arts in national life—something the North American environment occasionally tempts one to doubt. The Biennale this year is more than ever the vast, amorphous thing which has evolved over the past sixty years. The commissioners of the various countries, visiting journalists from all over the world and a cosmopolitan assortment of artists annually complain of its "bureaucracy", the alleged "politics" in its juries and

¹Canadian Art, Vol. XII, No. 1 (Autumn, 1954).

LOUIS ARCHAMBAULT

Grande femme assise. Terracotta



the lack of any guiding theme in its exhibits. But no one would deny that the Biennale serves its essential purpose as a great window giving a view of the world's art, and as a place where one can see new trends and find standards of comparison by which to judge the art of today.

The Biennale continues to grow in size to the point of filling its limited space in the Public Gardens full to overflowing with national pavilions. Thirty-four countries participated this year as against 31 in 1954 and 26 in 1952. The straggling Italian pavilion has been scheduled for replacement in 1958, and this year saw the appearance of two new pavilions. The small blue and white Finnish building is an informal prefabricated timber structure designed by Alvar Aalto which was erected and filled with the queer neurotic paintings of Helene Schjerfbeck,² all in one day. The new Japanese building designed by Takamasa Yoshizaka is more elaborate, "organic" in style, and complete with a charming garden containing ponds of goldfish.

Each year the Biennale authorities sponsor retrospective showings of several important artists. The place of honour is reserved for one of the great pioneers of modern painting, and this year an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Delacroix was organized for this purpose by Germain Bazin of the Louvre. Unfortunately, dark hangings and poor lighting in the Napoleon wing of the Piazza San Marco considerably lessened the impact which the rich colours and baroque compositions of the great nineteenth-century Romantic should have made. And, though the exotic *Femmes d'Alger* had been lent by the Louvre, the great exhibition-pieces in Paris, such as the *Massacre de Scio* and *La Liberté guidant le peuple*, were missing, probably because of their size. Another exhibition was devoted to the quiet, ineffective Italian painter, Arturo Tosi (1871-1956). The most interesting retrospectives were of two painters with an immediate influence upon contemporary painting, Juan Gris and Piet Mondrian. The Gris collection, organized by Daniel Henry Kahnweiler, dealer and historian of cubism, gave a sensation much

²This was the same exhibition which was circulated in Canada by the National Gallery in 1949.

J. L. SHADBOLT

Winter Calligraphy

Ink and casein



like that of "sweet" jazz as contrasted with the "hot" music of Picasso. The Mondrians, with their clear colours and architectural forms, made a particularly fine showing.

But the Biennale's main business is to show contemporary art, the latest there is. This the Italians do with a vengeance, in the fifty-odd rooms of their maze-like pavilion. Even so, any one Biennale cannot possibly include every artist with a claim to attention. By a complex method of selection involving many committees, the authorities somehow manage to present a good cross-section of the tremendous artistic output of their country. The sculptors, manifesting in our day the ancient Italian preoccupation with plastic values, are not as numerous as the painters, but the best of them are the more important artists. This year the best representative was Giacomo Manzù, who stands among the greatest sculptors of today. A prominent place was given to his *Seated Child*, a casting of which was bought earlier this year by the National Gallery of Canada. Also featured were three versions of his *Cardinal*, and together these works gave an unforgettable impression of the quiet strength and wiry grace of Manzù's style. But to see the other side of the picture, one had to set against the excellence of Manzù such work as Salvatore's repellent obstetric shapes, carried out in a material resembling green cheese, and Quirino Ruggieri's ambitious rendition of what appeared to be the entrance to a *bordello*.

A mixed bag! This was also true of the Italian paintings, of which great numbers were exhibited, in all sizes, shapes and styles. As in 1954, the only significant categories of painters were the realists and the abstractionists. In the ranks of the former marched the saddest case in modern art: Giorgio de Chirico, the supreme example of the good painter gone to pieces. The Chirico room contained some examples of his earlier surrealism with its magic use of classical subjects, but there were also the more recent works which were but a pastiche of the eighteenth century. Contrasting with the weakness of de Chirico was the earthiness of Renato Guttuso, a social realist whose work, unpleasant as it is, has considerable vitality. One of the chief attractions of the Biennale was his *The Beach*, a composition of figures enjoying themselves in various basic ways: lying in each other's arms, drying themselves or doing handstands. "An epic of *joie de vivre*", it is called in an article in the *New Statesman and Nation*, by John Berger who appears very doctrinaire in his espousal of social realism and sees in Guttuso, the great teacher of painting today:

"This canvas poses many essential problems which are obvious enough when stated, but which are ignored by nearly all artists today because their impulse is to narrow and refine instead of extend. How to equate actual colour with Impressionist light? How to equate Géricault with Picasso . . . ? How to preserve the fervour of Romanticism and yet avoid all nostalgia? How to combine the intimacy of Degas with the monumentality of Gauguin?



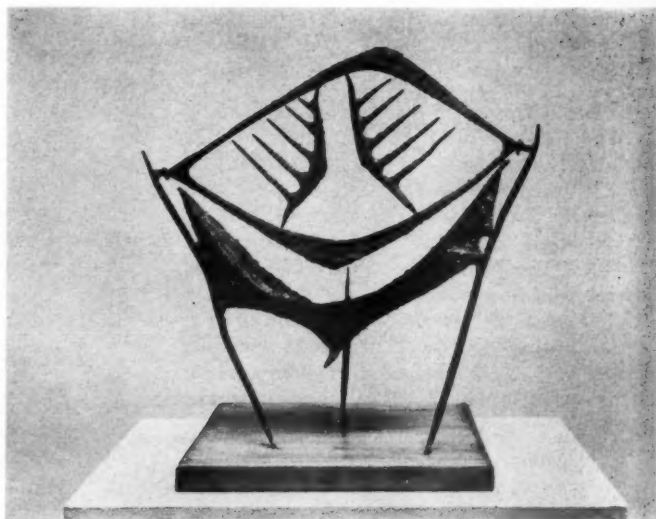
GIACOMO MANZÙ

Seated child

Bronze

*The National Gallery
of Canada*

*Another casting of this bronze
was in the Manzù exhibit
at the XXVIII Biennale, Venice*



LYNN CHADWICK

*Sculpture
in Equilibrium*

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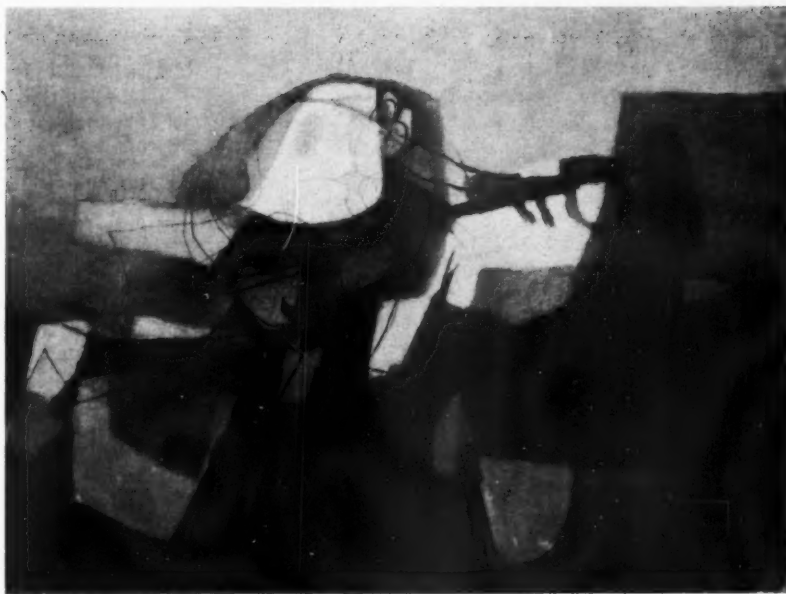
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For a Festival

Collection: Mr.
and Mrs. Joseph
Pulitzer, Jr.
St. Louis, Missouri



How to create a Diana whom it would not be incongruous to see eating an ice cream? ..."

No alternative to the trivial academism of social realism is yet offered except abstraction in its extreme form, and this, I believe, is pretty generally felt today to be a not very permanent answer to the universal problems of painting. Indeed, the very numbers of good abstractionists on view this year gave one the queer feeling that something else is just around the corner, though what it is has not yet been revealed. The best performances, to my mind, were by the intense Antonio Corpora, the loud Mattia Moreni, the powerful, insensitive Emilio Vedova, and above all by the poetic Afro, now a painter of international stature. The jury awarded Afro the grand prize for Italian painting.

Every year the Biennale invites a number of countries which lack pavilions of their own to exhibit in the Italian building. This year there were several absentees, notably Australia which made such a good showing in 1954; and Mexico, Norway and Sweden have not exhibited for several years running. Luxembourg, Turkey, Persia and Ceylon were new arrivals. Three of the invitees attracted the most attention: India, with an extraordinary mural design by Maqbul Fida Husain; Ireland, with a group of abstract paintings and tapestries by

Louis Le Broquy (who unexpectedly won the Nestlé prize for a "maternity subject"); and Canada. Critics who ventured into our gallery past a room full of murky Vietnamese lacquers expressed much interest in our modest collection. This began as concern for the plight of the plaster sculptures by Louis Archambault, including the monumental *La Famille*, which were broken in transit but which were mended by an Italian sculptor in time for the opening. The ink and casein paintings of Jack Shadbolt with their powerful forms and dramatic lights were singled out for mention by a leading English critic, Denys Sutton, in his articles for the London *Financial Times*. And the "single autographic prints" of Harold Town were remarked upon by many as among the most original contributions in the field of print-making. Both Alan Jarvis and I were convinced that the inspiration that lies behind Canadian painting today amply justifies our preparations for a new Canadian pavilion to be ready for 1958. We inspected the site for this building at the end of one of the main alleys of the park, with its superb view of the Lagoon.

A tour of the national pavilions involved seeing further quantities of art at considerable cost to eyes and feet. The Russians caused a minor sensation by returning to the Biennale

for the first time in twenty years, and their quaint Czarist pavilion bustled with crowds of visitors curious to know the truth of a rumour that social realism had been officially abandoned and that some abstractions would be shown. They were disappointed when they saw 180 works by 82 artists, all photographic in technique and ideological in subject, crammed into a small space. The icons of Stalin had been dispensed with, but there were still plenty of healthy collective farm and factory workers. The most amusing object was a bust described in the preliminary catalogue as *H. Jomson*, which turned out to be the Dean of Canterbury. Of the other Iron Curtain countries, Hungary was absent, and Czechoslovakia and Rumania avoided questions of style by showing large and innocuous collections of book illustrations. Poland gave the only hint of fresh air by showing some quilt-like paintings of folklore subjects which verged on abstraction. Non-Soviet Yugoslavia made the best showing of all the Communist countries, with paintings by such interesting artists as Lazar Vujaklija.

After this interlude it was refreshing to return to the free countries. A well arranged Belgian pavilion housed a retrospective of the little known but deserving painter Rik Wouters (1882-1916). The neighbouring Dutch pavilion featured Bart van der Leek who suffered from being shown the same year as his greater contemporary Mondrian. Switzerland and

Austria showed selections of good moderns including interesting sculptures. Spain, belatedly "going modern", displayed a crop of new painters but did not have her advertised retrospective of Gargallo's sculptures ready for the opening. A new note was sounded by the Japanese who showed several series of large woodcuts by Shiko Munakata, who carries on in a contemporary manner the old Japanese traditions of print-making and who was awarded the international prize for prints, and some large paintings by Takeo Yamaguchi which were blazoned with bold devices that (to our eyes) spelled out such extraordinary messages as I H I and N O.

But all these lesser pavilions were but a preparation for the "Big Four" of the Biennale: France, Germany, the United States and England. Everyone approached them with a feeling of expectancy. At recent Biennales the French pavilion has been too full and her collections too miscellaneous to have much effect, and this year was no exception. The main attractions here were retrospectives of the veteran cubist, Jacques Villon, who was given the international prize for painting, and the serious Dunoyer de Segonzac. Of contemporary painters the fashionable Bernard Buffet was most in evidence. Among the sculptures one discovered with some difficulty a group of small studies by the Swiss-born Giacometti, whose chances for a prize must have suffered from his meagre representation.



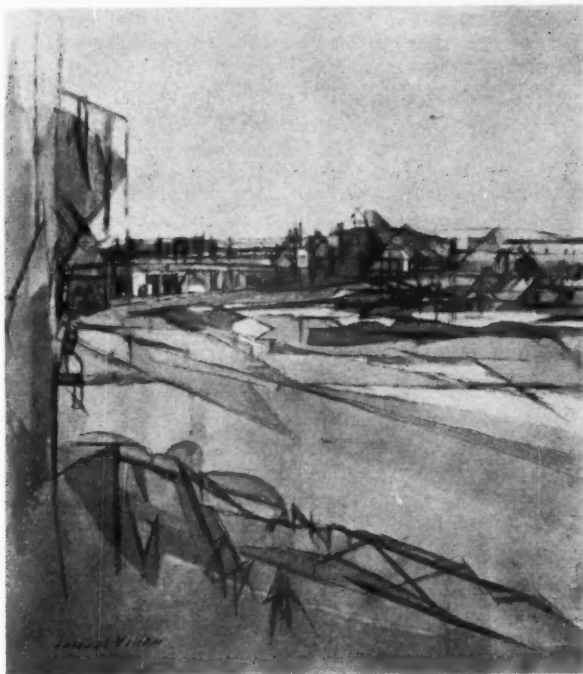
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JACQUES VILLON

*The Bridge
of Beaugency*



Germany, in the mausoleum atmosphere of a pre-war pavilion, exhibited an important retrospective of the expressionist painter Emil Nolde who died earlier this year. This collection included fine oils such as the *Pentecost* of 1909 and a number of water colours of equal calibre to that of the *Mary Wigman* in the National Gallery of Canada. Also represented was the painter Ernst Wilhelm Nay whose compositions seem to be inspired by balls of coloured wool.

The American pavilion contained a sort of display new to the Biennale, a "theme exhibition" called "The Artist and the City", which was organized by the Art Institute of Chicago. This was a distinguished collection of pictures which ran the gamut of modern American painting from the expressionists (Feininger and Marin) to the contemporaries (Jackson Pollock, Ben Shahn, De Kooning and others). The fact that 35 painters were represented gave little chance to any one painter to win a prize, and this in turn proved to many observers that the best kind of exhibition was one which represented a minimum number of artists with a maximum number of works.

The British followed the latter formula with good results. Inside their prim red-brick pavilion the visitor saw a well articulated collection arranged by Sir Herbert Read and Mrs. Lilian Somerville. First came a slightly too large collection of paintings by Ivon Hitchens whose semi-abstract style is now considerably less sensitive and evocative of the English landscape than formerly. Then followed a room or two full of the realistic banalities of John Bratby, Derrick Greaves, Edward Middleditch and Jack Smith, (the "Kitchen Sink School"). The best part of the pavilion was the section devoted to the sculptures of Lynn Chadwick, spiny metal constructions conceived with great force, even brutality. These qualities were strongly suggested by the appearance of the artist himself, a muscular high-complexioned man with light hair who went about Venice in a blue boiler suit hand in hand with a wife of the same cut. The awarding of the international prize to Chadwick was the big surprise of jury day, as most had favoured Giacometti, while Manzù had withdrawn his name from the contest.

Primitives and Provincials in Canadian Art

W. S. A. DALE

This article is based on a paper which was read to the ninth annual meeting of the Canadian Museums Association at Jordan, Ontario, on May 17 of this year, in connection with an exhibition of Canadian "Primitives" arranged by the Jordan Historical Museum of the Twenty. The author, who is a member of the curatorial staff of the National Gallery of Canada, was recently awarded a Dumbarton Oaks fellowship and is now preparing a book on medieval English ivories.

THE presentation of the Garbisch Collection to the National Gallery in Washington and of the Karolik Collection to the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, and the major exhibition of American "primitives" shown in Europe in 1954-55 have recently focused attention on a field of painting hitherto left almost entirely to the antique collectors. What was once bought to furnish a summer home in the rustic taste has now penetrated the very strongholds of art, and from now on it appears that our *musée imaginaire* may have to find space for Pickett as well as Picasso, for Grandma Moses as well as Michelangelo's *Moses*!

Perhaps it is only natural that these untaught artists, with their strong sense of pattern and simple approach to colour, should be "discovered" in the twentieth century, when the accomplished illusionism of the nineteenth is so widely discredited, and comparisons with Matisse and Dufy lie so conveniently to hand. Still, if we are to assess their achievements fairly, we cannot blind ourselves to the very real difference between the "primitives" and other artists.

The humbler creation of artists can be divided roughly into three kinds, provincial, "primitive", and peasant, all three of which may be found in Europe as well as in North America. In western Europe, for instance, where the nearness of cities and towns has kept all but a few areas in the main stream of taste, although an artist may be provincial in style, his technique usually remains on a professional level. Further east, on the other hand, one frequently finds the peasant, or "folk", artist, whose work is chiefly decorative in purpose, and is more closely allied to handicrafts like weaving and pottery, than to painting and sculpture. The authentic "prim-

itive" belongs to a middle-class middle-ground between these two, and in his art are combined, in somewhat awkward handling, the technique of the provincial and the strong pattern and colour of the peasant. Although this type does appear on the other side of the Atlantic, it is in the New World that he has played his major role.

As recently as fifty years ago it was still possible to think of Canada, and even the United States, as largely rural, and few cities could really claim to be cosmopolitan. In this pioneer society, with its leisurely modes of locomotion and communication, and lack of "canned" culture, there was naturally a greater demand for "home-grown" art than there is today, and this the "primitive" supplied, more often than not to eke out a humble living.

This kind of "primitive" has nothing to do with "Italian Primitives", so-called because they came at the beginning of a historical cycle. Our "primitives" have persisted from the seventeenth century to the twentieth without any perceptible development. Strictly speaking, we should call them "naïve artists", since their work is marked by an independence, or ignorance, of stylistic tradition (which accounts for their often unconventional techniques), and an unsophisticated approach to representation. However, since the term "primitive" has already taken its place in the art-historical vocabulary beside the equally inaccurate "Gothic" and "Mannerist", we may as well accept it, as long as we know what we mean by it.

In New England, one might be tempted to attribute the early appearance of "primitive" art to a Puritan aversion to image making, and a lack of professional training. In New France, however, there can be no such excuse,

HUGUES POMMIER

*Mère Catherine
de Saint-Augustin*

Hôtel-Dieu, Quebec



MICHEL DESSAILLANT
DE RICHETERRE

*Mère Louise Soumande
de Saint-Augustin*

Hôpital-général, Quebec



PAUL KANE

Indian Encampment

The Art Gallery of Toronto



ANONYMOUS, ca. 1820

Micmac Indians

since the Catholic tradition has always encouraged the use of visual aids to devotion, and as early as about 1668 Bishop Laval of Quebec had established the School of Saint-Joachim at Cap Tourmente, where, according to an early document, "woodworking, sculpture, painting, gilding of church ornaments, masonry and carpentry" were taught. At the same time, the tradition of church decoration preserved throughout the eighteenth century by the Levasseurs and into the nineteenth by the Baillairgé family speaks for the solid professional standing of the arts in French Canada.

Our earliest known Canadian paintings are, in fact, provincial French, and for the very good reason that the artists were born and trained in France. Naturally, then, we can

expect to find echoes of the academic art of Le Brun in the works attributed to Abbé Hugues Pommier and Frère Luc and, if their quality differs from that of continental art, their approach at least is the same.

Already by 1700, however, our first genuinely "primitive" art begins to appear, both in portraits and in those votive pictures which commemorate special favours received through the intercession of the saints. A good example of the former is the portrait of *Mère Louise Soumande de Saint-Augustin* in the Hôpital-général in Quebec, which was painted the day after her death in 1708 by Michel Dessailant de Richeterre. Placed side by side with the Abbé Pommier's *Mère Catherine de Saint-Augustin*, painted under similar circumstances in 1663 for the Hôtel-Dieu in Quebec, it

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appears cruder at first sight, but a close examination proves that the difference is not really one of quality at all. The provincial painter adheres to the spirit, if not the letter, of the baroque style, and even within the limits of commemorative portraiture finds room for the theatrical gesture of upcast eyes and the three-dimensional illusionism of the shadow of her crucifix. Not so the "primitive". Like an Egyptian artist he gives you an inventory of his sitter's features, so that your eyes travel from one detail to the next without establishing an over-all unity. Where Mère Catherine appears to occupy space, and to be surrounded by air, Mère Louise looks as flat as the Queen of Spades. On the other hand, her homely face and direct gaze make her portrait a much more convincing record of her personality.

Probably one of the earliest Canadian *ex-votos* is the large painting in Saint-Philippe at Three Rivers painted by Frère Luc for the

Laframboise family in the early 1670's, but to all intents this is an altarpiece, and can hardly be compared with the humbler thank-offerings of a generation later, which were usually the work of untrained artists.

The "primitive" characteristics of the typical votive picture are better seen in an example at Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré, dated 1754 and attributed to Paul Beaucourt, who came out to New France as a soldier and settled in Quebec. Like the portrait of Mère Louise, it is primarily a document, and records in word and picture not only the providential escape from drowning of three of the occupants of the overturned canoe but also the fate of the less successful petitioners of St. Anne. In the background, if you can call it that in a picture without depth, appears the broad St. Lawrence, with Lévis on the left, and with the promontory of Quebec, the mouth of the St. Charles and Beauport on the right. In comparison with the view of the same stretch

Attributed to
PAUL BEAUCOURT

Ex-voto of 1754

Church of
Sainte-Anne-de-Beaupré



JAMES PEACHEY
View of Quebec

Water colour

Public Archives, Ottawa



of river painted in 1781 by Captain James Peachey, one of those soldier-amateurs who arrived with the British army of occupation, it looks like a map. Even the cartographer's convention for representing towns has been adopted, and St. Anne might well be taken for one of the gentler winds of Heaven. Still, as a kind of pictograph, it tells the story all the more vividly, and the close-up of the main action has all the immediacy of a news photograph taken with a telephoto lens.

The vigorous survival of "primitivism" into the nineteenth century is shown in a small but exciting painting, *Micmac Indians*, by an anonymous artist about 1820, which reminds one of Paul Kane's *Indian Encampment on Lake Huron* of thirty years later, in the Art Gallery of Toronto.

Kane's great mission in life, as he tells us in *Wanderings of an Artist*, was to record the features, the manners and customs of the North-American Indians before they dis-

appeared. The sketch-books which he filled on his journeys do, in fact, form a valuable store of documentary material for the anthropologist. However, the paintings he composed from them in his Toronto studio smell strongly of the lamp, and owe more to the seventeenth-century Dutch masters than they do to his own first-hand experience.

The "primitive" artist of the *Micmac Indians* is obviously innocent of this academic training and, in place of Kane's accomplished perspective and chiaroscuro, gives an even attention to detail in every part of his picture. Here again is an inventory, not only of the worldly goods of the Indians but of the Indians themselves, and of the Canada geese heraldically displayed against the sky. Here again is a record, the life-history of the Indian presented as a habitat group and based, not on a fleeting impression, but on the experience of prolonged study.

In the thirties and forties of the century,

ANONYMOUS, ca. 1850. *Mère Flore Guillet de Saint-Joseph. The Seminary, Quebec*



before the rising popularity of the photograph killed it, there seems to have been a great demand for portraiture throughout eastern Canada, and among the provincial professionals one again finds the persistent "Primitive".

An unusual opportunity of comparing the two levels of production can be found in the portrait of *Sœur Emilie Pelletier, dite de Saint-Alphonse* painted in 1841 by Antoine Plamondon, which is in the collection of the National Gallery of Canada and the miniature copy of it by a contemporary "primitive", in the Archives of the Seminary in Quebec. Unlike the earlier portraits of nuns, Plamondon's was painted from life, and for the family of the sitter. It is not improbable, however, that the copy was made for, or even by, a member of her religious order when she died in 1846.

Here again can be seen the contrasts already noted in the earlier pair of portraits, the spacial illusionism and psychological detachment in one with the flatness and the directness of gaze in the other. On the one hand, Plamondon is obviously an accomplished painter, and his *Sœur Emilie* is as professional, and as sensuous, as a portrait by Ingres. On the other, the copyist evidently had difficulty in reproducing even an existing painting, and had to translate its sophisticated style into the ideographic language of "primitivism". But the result is a compelling likeness which makes the original portrait look slick and superficial by comparison, and links the copy, in its simple honesty, with Dessailant's *Mère Louise* of more than a century earlier.

There are, of course, still later "primitives" in Canadian painting, and one could bring the series of comparisons with professional work down to our own day, but perhaps the above selection will be enough. Of necessity, it has been limited by the number of the known specimens, and by the desire to isolate the genuine article from the borderline case. In any case, it does at least indicate that "Primitives" have been a constant factor in the history of Canadian art. As such they have not been without their influence on their more accomplished brethren in expressing, as they have, the pioneering virtues of simplicity, frankness, and self-reliance, which we are proud to claim as our Canadian birthright.



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Six Hundred Artists Asked to Exhibit in Winnipeg this November

The aim of the Winnipeg Show, which is now an annual event, is to bring together the best Canadian paintings and sculptures of the year and to give citizens of Manitoba an opportunity not only to see them but to purchase them.

Over six hundred Canadian artists have been invited to send pictures for this year's exhibition which will be held from November 4 to 25. The judges will be H. Harvard Arnason, director of the Walker Art Center, Minneapolis, and the Vancouver painter, B. C. Binning. This year \$1,500 will be given in awards, \$550 more than last year. The organizers, the Women's Committee of the Winnipeg Art Gallery and the Art Students' Club of the University of Manitoba, are both joining in a campaign to stimulate the sales among local collectors.

Failure to Implement Massey Report Deplored by the Canadian Arts Council

At its eleventh annual meeting in Montreal in June, the Canadian Arts Council unanimously went on record as "deploring the failure of the Canadian Government to implement the major recommendation of the Massey Commission, that a Canada Council be established to promote Canadian development in arts and letters" and emphasized "the urgent need for action if many of our national and professional organizations are to survive and make their full contribution to Canadian life." The Council also reminded the Government that, "despite Canada's unprecedented material prosperity, our prestige abroad

as a nation is suffering because these organizations lack the recognition and support which all civilized countries accord the arts today, and because they are thus unable to represent Canada adequately in other lands."

John Parkin of Toronto was re-elected president. Five new member societies were welcomed, bringing the total to 20: the Dominion Drama Festival, the Canadian Council of Authors and Artists, the Opera Festival Association, the Canadian Society for Education through Art and the Royal Winnipeg Ballet. A change in constitution will make regional as well as national groups eligible for membership.

The Council's annual award for distinguished service to the arts, first given to the Governor General, was awarded this year to Tom Patterson, organizer of the Stratford Shakespearean Festival.

Canadian Government Overseas Awards

Canadian artists continue each year to win a few of the coveted Canadian Government Overseas Fellowships which allow the holders to work and study abroad in either the Netherlands or France. The award consists of \$4000 and transportation expenses. Those artists obtaining them this year were Jack Nichols of Toronto, J. L. Shadbolt of Vancouver, R. S. Shepherd of St. Johns, Newfoundland, and Carl Dair of Richvale, Ontario.

Nichols will concentrate in Paris on the graphic arts, with particular emphasis on lithography; Shadbolt plans to paint in France; Shepherd, who is at present head of the Newfoundland Academy of Art, will study art museums

Coast to Coast in Art

J. L. SHADBOLT

*Ritual Forms in Black,
White and Brown*

Ink and casein

The Art Gallery of Toronto

*Shown in the XXVIII
Biennale, Venice*

in the Netherlands. Dair, who is a typographic designer, will do advanced research in type design in Utrecht and Amsterdam.

Also given a fellowship was Norah McCullough, executive secretary of the Saskatchewan Arts Board; she will study the crafts in relation to industry in France.

Canadian Government Overseas Scholarships, open to those who have only recently graduated from art schools or universities and which are for the sum of \$2000, were given to two young painters, Edmund Alleyn and Denys Matte, both of Quebec City. They will continue their studies in Paris.

A Summer Institute Discusses the Arts

Social and economic topics usually concern those summer discussion institutes which are becoming such a feature of Canada's intellectual landscape. But one of these gatherings, the Mount Allison Summer Institute was devoted this year not to politics but to the place of the arts in the nation. Its meetings, held from August 9 to 11 at Mount Allison University in Sackville, New Brunswick, consisted of round-table discussions on the proposed Canada Council, on children and the arts, on private support for the arts and the influence of television. Sir Ernest MacMillan took part and Dr. W. S. A. Dale of the National Gallery and Walter Herbert of the Canada Foundation.

Important Bequests Left Montreal Museum

Among the bequests of the late Charles F. Martin, M.D., LL.D., and Mrs. Martin to the Montreal Museum of Fine Arts were: *Salisbury Cathedral* by John Constable, formerly in the R. B. Angus collection; *Portrait of a Student*, by Quentin Massys; also Persian miniatures, Chinese plates from the Ming Dynasty, and an early French walnut cabinet with marble inlay. Dr. Martin was president of the museum from 1937 to 1947.

Saskatchewan Arts Board Replacement

In mid-September Miss Blodwen Davies will take the position of executive secretary of the Saskatchewan Arts Board, which she will hold during the year's absence of Miss Norah McCullough who goes to France on a Canadian Government Fellowship.

Although Miss Davies is well known chiefly as a Canadian writer, being the author of a number of historical books and of a biography of Tom Thomson, one of her major interests in recent years has been working towards the establishment of the Rural Life Foundation of Markham Town-

ship, Ontario. She believes that rural foundations and such institutions as the Saskatchewan Arts Board have a major role in helping to preserve the values and traditions of a soundly based agricultural society, and that the farm communities have a significant place to maintain in the social life of the nation.

Nova Scotia Celebrates the Arts in a Festival

That the arts, when presented in an interesting, entertaining and informal manner appeal to the mass of citizens, was proved again at the first Nova Scotia Summer Festival of Arts. In co-operation with a local council, with artists, with the press and radio and television, the Nova Scotia government organized this festival held at Tatamouche on August 13 and 14. Performers selected by invitation mirrored the province's achievements; the resulting programme was professional in standard and deeply rewarding.

Nova Scotia's long tradition of good craftsmanship is now finding fresh and original expression; also a more liberating influence is making its presence felt in painting. All this was obvious in the festival which was unique in the province's history. Gay was the spirit, bands played, banners floated in the breeze; the more than ten thousand visitors who came left filled with good food for body and soul. "How did it all happen?" the self-critical Nova Scotian, still wondering, asks himself.

An Important Conference on Galleries and Art Education in Canada

At the invitation of the National Gallery of Canada some forty art museum directors and curators and the heads of art departments in universities and colleges met to discuss regional needs in relation to the National Gallery's extension services. No formal recommendations were submitted by the conference, but the ideas brought forward by those attending are being embodied in a report for future action to be presented to the Board of Trustees of the National Gallery.

The conference did much to end any lingering sense of regionalism in art in Canada. As Colin Graham of the Art Gallery of Greater Victoria wrote afterwards in the *Victoria Daily Times*: "Names and galleries that had been vague abstractions on the outer fringes of the horizon materialized in reasonably concrete form. We got to know each other's views on the functions and needs of a gallery in a Canadian environment, as well as something of each other's special problems."

Where to Exhibit 1956-57

<i>Society or Sponsor</i>	<i>Location and Opening Date</i>	<i>Final Date for Entries</i>	<i>Address for Application Forms</i>
Annual Saskatchewan Exhibition	March 8, 1957 Saskatoon	March 2, 1957 Saskatchewan Artists only	Saskatchewan Arts Board, 1150 Rose St., Regina, Sask.
Art Gallery of Hamilton Winter Exhibition	February 1, 1957 Hamilton	January 17, 1957	Secretary, Art Gallery of Hamilton, Hamilton, Ont.
British Columbia Society of Artists	March 5, 1957 Vancouver	Members, invited contributors only	Mrs. A. M. Bell, 2566 Marine Drive, West Vancouver, B.C.
Canadian Group of Painters	November 9, 1956 Toronto	Members, invited contributors only	
Canadian Society of Graphic Art	April, 1957 Hamilton	Early March, 1957	Harley Parker, 255 Dunview Ave., Willowdale, Ont.
Canadian Society of Painters in Water Colour	February 8, 1957 Toronto	January 9, 1957	Edwy F. Cooke, 190 Heward Ave., Toronto 8, Ont.
Manitoba Society of Artists	March, 1957 Winnipeg	February, 1957	Miss Barbara Cook, 109 Wilmot Place, Winnipeg 13, Man.
Maritime Art Association	September, 1957 Sackville, N.B.	September 8, 1957	Mr. Ted Pulford, Mount Allison Art Gallery, Sackville, N.B.
Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Spring Exhibition	April 5, 1957 Montreal	March 2, 1957	Miss K. Kennedy, Montreal Museum of Fine Arts, Montreal
Ontario Society of Artists	March 9, 1957 Toronto	February 2, 1957	Mr. Roy Austin, 407 Birchmount Rd., Scarborough, Ont.
Royal Canadian Academy	November 16, 1956 Toronto	Entries closed October 10, 1956	Fred Finley, 63 Warland Ave., Toronto 6, Ont.
Society of Canadian Painter-Etchers and Engravers	March, 1957 Toronto	February 5, 1957	Mrs. Anne Hook, 32 Mountview Ave., Toronto 9, Ont.
Western Ontario Exhibition	May, 1957 London, Ont.	April 17, 1957	Clare Bice, Public Library & Art Museum, London, Ont.
Windsor Art Association, Essex County Artists Exhibition	February 1, 1957 Windsor, Ont.	January 21, 1957	Kenneth Saltmarche, Willistead Art Gallery Windsor, Ont.
The Winnipeg Show, Winnipeg Art Gallery	November 4, 1956 Winnipeg	Entries closed	Women's Committee, Winnipeg Art Gallery



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NEW BOOKS ON THE ARTS

PRINCIPLES OF ART TEACHING. By Ruth Mock. 94 pp.; 8 col. pl.; 8 black and white pl.; 13 pen and ink ill. London: University of London Press. (Canadian Distributors: Clarke, Irwin & Company Limited, Toronto). \$3.75.

This is a sensible and lucid publication on the development of art teaching. One puts down the book with a feeling of full agreement with every word that the author has written.

Under the guidance of Cizek, Marion Richardson, Lisper and others, a revolution in art teaching took place, following wide changes in the concept of education due to the study of psychology, in the early years of this century. In the time that has passed, many other influences have had a hand in the teaching of art. Confusion has often resulted, tricks and drivel have crept in through opportunists, and the work of more intelligent teachers has sometimes been lost. Ruth Mock has written a timely book, for it is right that we should now consider principles of art teaching and set about establishing a tradition. She urges teachers to study the wealth of the world's art and the activity of the artist with the conviction that it has meaning for their classes. "We can use for the education of every child the qualities which go to make up a work of art," she says. "We cannot achieve anything unless we can establish a healthy and constructive tradition in Art Education, free from fashion and personal prejudice and, with all concerned, examine every method in the light and nature of the child and of Art itself". This tradition, she contends, must be laid by teachers who know what is good and are sure of themselves and their ability to judge the children's work. "There is no right or wrong in Art; only thoughtful or lazy work".

The book contains many practical chapters on choice of materials, subject matter, infants, pattern, lettering and handwriting, crafts, pictures in schools, tricks, and a section on teaching which would seem to come from the heart of a teacher who "knows what is good and is sure of herself". Administration

officers in the schools will like what she says about what they have a right to expect from art teachers. Trained specialist and non-specialist teachers will like to find themselves in such good company and teacher-training centres should pass out this book to their student teachers, pointing to the inspiring chapter on teaching. This review may well close, echoing her statement that teaching is very largely an act of faith. We have to give children what we believe to be the fundamental skills and understanding and then leave them, in their own time, to create their own tradition.

G. PAIGE PINNEO.

ART AND ARTIST. (Contributions by 16 artists.) 240 pp. + 20 ill. Berkeley, California: University of California Press. \$3.75.

Each of the chapters of this book aims to explain how an individual artist creates, but they range in nature from one on how research was done on a Van Gogh film by the Italian writer, Cesare Zavattini, to a selection of self-revealing letters from the German sculptor and painter, Ernst Barlach. The editors have tried to show the toils of aesthetic labour in a wide variety of directions and efforts; they have also placed particular emphasis in their choice of contributors on those who can be expected to demonstrate "the newness and strangeness that attends the creative process".

This book does succeed in the majority of its chapters in setting up a channel of communication between a number of original artists and those who wish to understand more fully all that is at first sight unfamiliar and unusual in the contemporary idiom. It is interesting to find that, in their selection, the editors have gone to England for the sculptor, Henry Moore, to Spain for the architect and engineer, Eduardo Torroja, and to Canada for the painter, Jack Shadbolt.

Shadbolt describes the dilemma of many artists today when he writes: "I am an intellectual artist with a heavy dose of expressionism in my nature. . . I am highly developed at both levels, but only rarely these days can I unite the two in simultaneous flow." He goes on to explain how he seeks to achieve this unity, by using such natural themes as field grass and leaves and birds and rocks as the basis for a visual paraphrasing of his more abstract emotions, so that leaves become "reminders of a lost cause" or that all the struggles of life are re-enacted in water colours with the protagonists "part insect, part bird, part animal, but never quite".

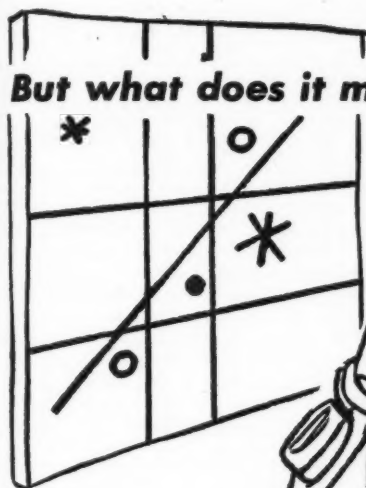
The intellectual side of Shadbolt, however, unfortunately at times in his essay gains too much control; this makes for hard reading of certain none too concretely worded passages in what is his otherwise admirable description of "Picture in Process"—the title given his chapter in the book.

D.W.B.



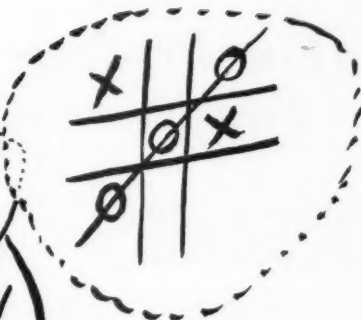
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THE ANALYSIS OF BEAUTY. By William Hogarth. Edited by Joseph Burke. 244 pp.; 12 plates. Toronto: Oxford University Press. \$6.50.

A reading of the *Analysis*, the revolutionary "key document" of eighteenth-century art, "the first work in European literature," as Joseph Burke says, "to make formal values both the starting-point and basis of a whole aesthetic theory", brings home to us how much more Hogarth was than a cartoonist who reported, with acute observation and wit, the manners of his day and pointed a moral. With his insistence on the necessity of looking to nature instead of continuing to follow classic models and pedantic theories, with his immense curiosity and his love of adventure, his recognition of the importance of variety, his understanding of the human love of the chase and his delight in it, he makes us feel what a wonderful place the world is and how foolish we are when we shut ourselves up in little boxes and reduce art to what he called "contemprible meanness".

So we ought to be grateful to Joseph Burke for this new edition, based on the first of 1753, and for his introduction in the form of a biographical and critical essay. The general reader won't be very much interested in the rejected passages, dug up in the British Museum (those are for the scholar); but Hogarth is for everybody. He took pains to make his arguments appealing, using the most homely and pertinent illustrations instead of vapoury abstractions. His common sense and his vigour and audacity help, too.

R.A.

THE GREAT CENTURIES OF PAINTING: THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY. By Jacques Lassaigue and Giulio Carlo Argan. 235 pp.; 116 colour plates. Geneva: Albert Skira. (Canadian Distributors: Burns & MacEachern, Toronto.) \$20.00.

"One of the chief aims of this book", as the authors point out in their preface, "is to show that . . . the Renaissance was not a specifically Italian cultural and artistic movement, which little by little gained ground and made good in other European countries". Indeed, it sets out to prove the opposite point, that it was in fact "a Europe-wide phenomenon, even if it assumed different forms in Flanders, Italy and Germany".

As in other volumes of the same series, an attempt is made here to relate the contemporaneous arts of several countries, and to see the Platonism of the Italians and the empiricism of the Northerners in their approach to form merely as different aspects of the same quest. Thus, the reader is given a vivid panorama of European painting of the fifteenth century from its dawn to its close.

Nor is this book merely popular in its appeal. The scholarly arguments over the birth of Netherlandish painting are reviewed in detail in the first section, and the Masaccio-Masolino problem raised by the parallel phenomenon in Italy comes in for equally close attention in the second. Even the arts of Germany and France, so often ignored in surveys of this period, are introduced in a fresh and inter-

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esting way, and such figures as Conrad Witz, Stephan Lochner, the Masters of the Rohan Hours and the Aix Annunciation, Enguerrand Charonton and Jean Fouquet take on a more palpable reality.

In the third and fourth sections of the book the later developments of these various schools are taken up, and the Flemish-inspired ateliers of Spain and Portugal are added to the list. The text is rounded out with a selected bibliography for the more serious student.

The quality of the colour plates is good. One wonders, however, whether the selection might not have been improved by omitting some of the reproductions of details from paintings, and by including a few more of the pictures actually discussed for which no reproductions are shown.

W. S. A. DALE.

OROZCO. By Alma Reed. 308 pp.; 25 reproductions. Toronto: Oxford University Press. \$6.00.

This is the story of José Clemente Orozco's exile in New York. No one is better equipped to write it than Mrs. Reed, who dug him up out of obscurity and neglect, found him patrons, and walls, wrote about him and got other people to write about him, reproduced his works in an impressive volume, wangled exhibitions and even opened a gallery to promote him. Nobody worked and fought harder for his recognition in the United States and the world than she did. Her book is the story of a crusade and if at times she seems over adulatory, her passion may be excused and it is soon forgotten as the absorbing chapters of social history unfold: the attacks on Orozco's work at home in Mexico; the destruction of 60 of his water colours by the United States Customs when he crossed the border in 1917; the divided opinions over the murals he painted for Pomona College; the withdrawal of support by backers of the New School for Social Research who didn't approve of his including the Soviet Union in his picture of the world; the final succumbing of the stronghold of liberalism to McCarthyism and the drawing of the curtain over the objectionable panel; the protests that "brutal Mexican stuff" was ruining the beauty of Dartmouth (Orozco thought his mural might "save the students from drowning in a sea of sugar"). It is a man of power who is revealed, in his courage, his integrity and his passion for humanity, as well as in his imagination and his handling of the tools of his art.

R.A.

DIARIES AND LETTERS OF KAETHE KOLLWITZ. Edited by her son, Hans Kollwitz. 200 pp. and 48 plates. Chicago: Henry Regnery. \$7.75.

Kaethe Kollwitz's strong sense of personal responsibility, her passion for justice, came from her grandfather, a pastor of the Free Congregation of Koenigsberg in East Prussia—on his gravestone were the words *Man is not here to be happy but to do his duty*—his traffic was not with humanity; and it was her father, a builder and lay preacher, who led her to socialism. She wasn't sure if the power that inspired her work was religion; certainly it wasn't orthodox religion, because her heritage was a free and ardently questioning spirit; and she was never sure of her politics. She belonged to no party. She believed in socialism, in the sense of the longed-for brotherhood of men, and she came to consider herself not a revolutionary but an evolutionary. She was rejected by both the Kaiser's Germany and Hitler's.

She was involved in humanity on the deepest levels, a woman watching and suffering, who showed the face of sorrow to the world in sculpture and drawing and so, simply and powerfully, preached compassion. The first illustration in this book is a self-portrait of a girl in her twenties, looking steadily and seriously, expectantly and doubtfully, at the world; the last is a self-portrait of a woman nearly eighty, bowed with the weight of life, turned toward death. Death is a familiar subject in her drawings and lithographs, the dread snatcher of children and the comforter of the old. But love is here, too, especially the love of mothers for their children. And there is always human dignity. Nothing is more impressive in its human grandeur than the life-size granite monument she created for a military cemetery in Flanders where her son was buried; in the two kneeling figures of the father and mother there is strength and reassurance.

In the diaries and letters which illuminate Kaethe Kollwitz's work, in the son's foreword and the grand-daughter's recollections, you meet a great human being. It is a chastening but enlarging and reassuring experience. Not since reading the letters of Vincent van Gogh and the writings of Albert Schweitzer have I encountered such warmth of heart and nobility of spirit.

R.A.

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THE ART FORUM

Dear Sir:

There is, in this country, a self-conscious art epidemic . . . Predominant participants are out of work housewives and the retired (never the younger or ambitious). To their delight they are being initiated into a new fraternity of "Modern Art." And because of this they are prevented from appreciating any other. They have become fashionable.

A government (Canadian) wanting eagerly to stimulate creative activities has set aside sums of money to give the cause respectability.

Even have they created minor figure-heads.

European excursion trips are doled out to the artists considered to be worthy by the government. He must of course abide by the rules (all artists abide by the rules). This results in an influx of fashionable eclectics worshipping the works of foreign inventors.

Then, to contradict artistic convictions, all expression, art, morals and what you like are thrown to the wind when it comes to the erection of official buildings . . .

Somewhere there must be that brave spirit waiting, unappreciated to lead us into our own path of indigenous artistic expression.

ROGER KEMBLE,
Victoria, B.C.

Dear Sir:

We are anxious to trace all known water colours by Sir Frank Brangwyn, R.A., for the purpose for a book on his water colours and a catalogue raisonné, and should appreciate your bringing this to the attention of your readers. So far, we have traced one in the Toronto Art Gallery and two in a private collection in Edmonton. Three only in Canada doesn't seem to be right. We are now seeking the following information from anyone possessing a Brangwyn water colour: (a) title; (b) size with height first; (c) if signed or dated; (d) reproduced; (e) exhibited; (f) ex. collection.

FRANK LEWIS,
The Tithe House, London Rd.,
Leigh-on-Sea, Essex, England



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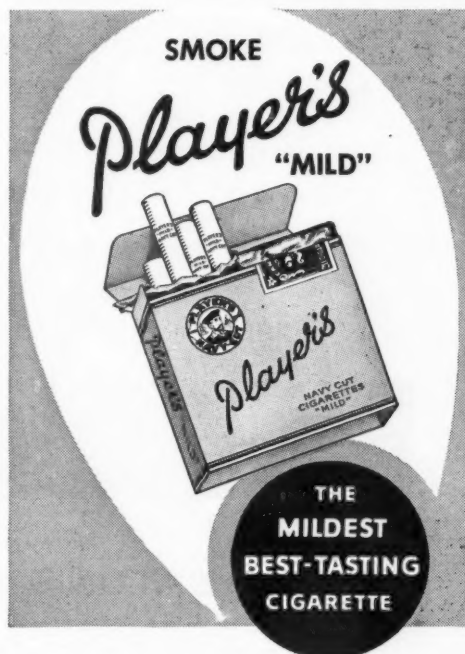
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